



Leicester
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED - ABBEY, BELGRAVE, CROWN HILLS,
CHARNWOOD, LATIMER, RUSHEY MEAD, STONEYGATE, SPINNEY HILL,
WYCLIFFE**

CABINET

5 MARCH 2001

ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS PROGRAMME 2001 / 2002

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING.

1. SUMMARY

This report summarises the proposed programme of environmental works in the declared Renewal Areas and Urban Management Areas.

This report seeks Cabinet approval to proceed with the programme of environmental works and the home maintenance programme as outlined in appendix 1 and the Environment Task force – New Deal rear wall scheme outlined in the supporting information.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- i. The proposed environmental works in renewal areas be approved as shown in the report (para 2.1) be agreed.
- ii. The Home Maintenance programme for Belgrave and Highfields Urban Management Areas is approved as shown in the report (para 2.2) be agreed.
- iii. The proposed programme of works for the Environment Task Force (New Deal Rear Wall Scheme) in North Belgrave Renewal Area Phase 2 is approved as shown in the supporting information.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Renewal areas have a ten-year life and it is essential that resources are made available for action to be sustained.

The current capital programme for 2001/2002, to be approved on 5 March 2001, contains £345,000 for environmental works in renewal areas, £50,000 for city wide home maintenance schemes and £50,000 for the provision of rear walls in Belgrave.



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5 MARCH 2001

PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS PROGRAMME 2001/2002

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION AND APPENDICES

1. BACKGROUND

Leicester's Renewal Strategy was adopted in 1976 and has followed a mainly area based approach. Following the declaration of Renewal Areas it has been custom and practice to embark on environmental improvements works to compliment the house improvement programme. The DETR Good Practice Guidance entitled "Running and Sustaining Renewal Areas" highlights strategic environmental objectives should include provision to achieve improvements of the environment of the area, and to carry out work that will improve the security and sense of well being of residents in their home and local area. The programme put forward for the renewal areas and citywide home maintenance schemes helps to achieve these objectives.

North Belgrave Renewal Area Phase 1 has benefited in the past from having a youth training scheme working in the area. The rebuilding of defective shared and entry and garden walls has been the main objective together with replacement gates. The programme now needs to continue in North Belgrave Renewal Area Phase 2 to address the outstanding defective and dangerous rear alley walls.

Originally the scheme working on this project was the Leicester City Council Career Start Training Scheme, which was superseded by the Environment Task Force - New Deal for the young unemployed. These schemes have provided effective training for young people in bricklaying and also some carpentry skills. All trainees work towards the completion of NVQ level 1 and 2.

The labour element of the work is provided free of charge and the council pays an agreed sum per property for the materials used. This report outlines the works programme needed to complete all outstanding work in the area.

2. PROPOSALS FOR 2001/2002.

2.1 Renewal Areas

The proposed environmental works report is detailed in paragraph 1, appendix 1. All work undertaken is in the three active renewal areas, namely Evington Valley Phases 1 and 2, and North Belgrave Phase 2.

2.2 Citywide Maintenance Schemes

The proposals for the citywide home maintenance schemes are detailed in paragraph 2, appendix 1. The schemes will be directed towards the Urban Management Areas in Highfields and Belgrave to support the current SRB programme both in terms of complimentary activity and leverage.

2.3 Environment Task Force – New Deal Rear Walls Scheme, North Belgrave Renewal Area Phase 2.

The proposals for the Environment Task Force New Deal Rear Walls Scheme are detailed in appendix 2. There are currently 198 properties in the North Belgrave Renewal Area Phase 2 that require work on their rear walls and entries. The breakdown is as follows:

Table 1 shows the current condition of the walls.

Priority	No	Description
High	139	Properties with shared entries and walls requiring rebuilding as they have been assessed as very dangerous or in many cases non-existent.
Medium	43	Properties with poor / dangerous walls.
Low	85	Properties with no shared entries but requiring patch pointing and general maintenance
Total	198	

Table 2 sets out the proposed programme on a worst first basis.

Phase	No of props	Addresses
1	21	Stafford Street 7, 11-15, 25-35, 47-57,61-63, 69-71,89 (odds)
2	12	Stafford Street 8-10,14, 24-34, 46,56-58 (evens)
	16	Lancashire Street 3-7, 13-17,23-25,41,47-49,53,71,77-81 (odds)
3	21	Lancashire Street 12-34, 40-50, 52-56 (evens)
4	14	Lancashire Street 76-102 (evens)
5	20	St Michaels Avenue 4-26, 32-38, 40-42, 50-52, 60-62
	2	Harrison Road 350-352
6	30	St Michaels Avenue 3-15, 55-99
	3	Harrison Road 334-346, 348
Total	139	

Experience has shown that the average cost per property is £1500 not including the owners' contribution. This sum would normally pay for the demolition and rebuilding or rear walls, party walls, and the renewal of the garden gate and entry gate as necessary. Reslabbing is only carried out where disturbed. The budget sum of

£50,000 would be expected to provide for approximately 30+ properties to benefit this year. This means that phase 1 and half of phase 2 can be completed this year. All owners that benefit from the New Deal Rear Walls Scheme should make a flat rate contribution of £150 towards the overall cost of skips used and for the work cabins provided on site.

Under delegated powers the Director of Housing would have the authority to make the best use of any remaining Rear Walls Scheme budget once the properties in Phase 2 have been completed.

3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

The Renewal Strategy seeks to direct resources to the most vulnerable households in the City by giving access to a range of services which seek to improve the living conditions, health and wellbeing of the participating households. Discretionary renovation grants are targeted where houses are unfit.

The area strategy that has been followed has meant that services have been directed to areas where residents are generally disadvantaged with above average populations of older people and people on low incomes. They often also have above average populations of people of ethnic minority origins.

The New Deal Programme aims to help people who are unemployed, including those who are disadvantaged in the labour market to find employment.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has the power to declare Renewal Areas and carry out certain works in them, and to provide the range of housing renewal grants by virtue of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

The Council also has certain duties, in dealing with unfit housing and an annual consideration of house conditions. Guidance is given in Circular 17/96 "Private Sector Renewal: a Strategic Approach".

Environmental Health Officers in Environment and Development take enforcement action when necessary.

5. SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Renewal Strategy seeks to improve, protect and maintain the physical environment by enabling homeowners to improve the fabric of their homes. The specifications and scheduling used in environmental works seeks to use environmentally friendly materials and processes, in accordance with EMAS.

In broad terms the work of the Renewal Strategy offers many "quality of life" improvements and provides for wider participation by residents in decision making and action.

The Environment Task Force has to meet a wide range of environmental objectives in order to secure funding.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

In a renewal area it is possible for various schemes to be carried out that are intended to reduce crime and the fear of crime. In particular schemes have been carried to improve security through improvements to back alleyways. Works carried out to the rear perimeter of the property will ensure access is reduced to the uninvited. Victims of crime and of domestic violence can also be assisted through specific SRB funded projects and the complimentary action undertaken in the citywide maintenance schemes.

Many of the people in the New Deal Programme will be ex-offenders or people at risk of offending. It is hoped that helping young people into secure employment will help reduce the risk of offending in the future. This scheme will also compliment the SRB 4 target-hardening project.

7. DETAILS OF CONSULTATIONS

Residents Groups In Evington Valley Renewal Area, and North Belgrave Renewal Area have been consulted on the programme of environmental works, and individual residents are consulted on details concerning their properties

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Local Government & Housing Act 1989
- Department of the Environment Circular 12/90
- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.
- Department of the Environment Circular 17/96
- Review of Renewal Strategy Policies - Report of the Director of Housing to Housing Committee, March 1997.
- 'Annual Review of Leicester's Renewal Strategy Policies'. Report Of the Director of Housing to Housing Committee, 6 January 1999.
- Annual Review of Leicester's Renewal Strategy Policies'. Report Of the Director of Housing to Housing Committee, March 2000.
- Background Files held by the Director of Housing.

HOUSING DEPARTMENT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Aim of the Housing Department is 'A decent home within the reach of every citizen of Leicester'.

In particular the Renewal Strategy meets the key objectives of:

- Improve the condition of Leicester's housing stock and resolve unfitness in all sectors
- encourage and enable owners to continue to maintain the private sector housing stock
- reduce the number of empty and under-occupied homes in Leicester
- enable citizens of Leicester to stay in their homes as long as they continue to meet their needs
- enable all citizens to have access to affordable warmth and healthy living environment
- Maximise home security in the private sector through advice and direct provision of locks and alarms, etc.

Officer to contact about this report -

Janice Pearson, Renewal & Grants Service Manager, x5386 or 0116 299 5386

1. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS PROGRAMME IN RENEWAL AREAS 2001/2002

Scheme Title	Number of properties	Estimated cost (ex fees)
Evington Valley Renewal Area Phase 1		
Devana Road / Kimberley Road Retaining Wall	28	95,000
Evington Valley Renewal Area Phase 2		
East Park Road Front Walls Scheme (384 - 430)	17	65,000
North Belgrave Renewal Area Phase 2		
Lancashire Street Front Wall Scheme Phase 1 (3-43 odds)	21	52,500
Lancashire Street Front Wall Scheme Phase 2 (45 - 85 odds)	21	52,500
Lancashire Street Front Wall Scheme Phase 3 (12-54 evens)	22	55,000
Reserve Schemes		
Normanton Road Front Walls Scheme (1-21 odds) [R]	11	33,000
Dashwood Road Shared Rear Alleyways Scheme Phase 1 (10-18 evens) [R]	9	10,000
Dashwood Road Shared Rear Alleyways Scheme Phase 2 (20-34 evens) [R]	17	22,000
Lyme Road Rear Alleyways Scheme Phase 1 (47-49 odds) [R]	7	5,000
Draper Street Rear Alleyways Scheme Phase 1 (14-22 evens) [R]	10	10,000
Lancashire Street Front Wall Scheme Phase 4 (64 - 110 evens) [R]	24	60,000
Total of proposed schemes	109	320,000
Total of reserve schemes *	78	140,000
Overall total of programme	187	460,000
Agreed budget		345,000

Note:

The Devana Road / Kimberley Road Retaining Wall Scheme may present significant technical problems and relies on every property agreeing to take part. In the event of the scheme failing all the reserve schemes scheduled for Evington valley Renewal Areas Phases 1 and 2 will go ahead. This accounts for the large amount of over programming.

2. CITYWIDE HOME MAINTENANCE SCHEMES

Scheme title	No of Props	Estimated costs ex fees
Wind/watertight	30	30,000
Energy Efficiency	50	10,000
Security Schemes	45	9,000
DIY courses		1,000
Total		50,000

3. PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR THE REAR ALLEYWAY/REAR WALL SCHEME - NORTH BELGRAVE RENEWAL AREA PHASE 2

Phase	No of props	Addresses
1	21	Stafford Street 7, 11-15, 25-35, 47-57,61-63, 69-71,89 (odds)
2	12	Stafford Street 8-10,14, 24-34, 46,56-58 (evens)
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